



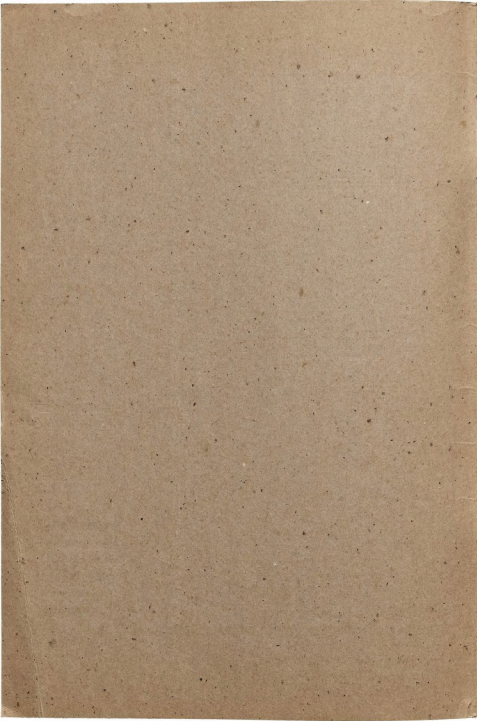
SOUND DESIGN!!!

ISSUE SIXTEEN



PRICE - \$7.95





Emigre #16

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EMIGRE
#16
48 SHATTUCK
SQUARE
BERKELEY
CA 94704
USA



and design.

One is that we receive countless numbers of unsolicited printed and recorded items. People have sent us literally hundreds of fanzines, magazines, invited other ephemera. At first we held on to anything that looked "interesting" as if to be more selective. The selection process we enforced was commercial, predictable or obviously ripped off went right into the trash and smelled good went into "The Box." After five years of collecting, we found that we have found to be inspiring, funny, and at times significant.

watered down, censored messages or opinions. They are not projects that meet common denominator audience. Instead, these works, which are often (jokes [friends, small mailing lists, etc.], are usually quite esoteric and so, the undiluted opinions and the cryptic and ambiguous messages that abound. And I carved the way that some were produced: often inexpensively in methods.

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With this issue we hope to accomplish two things. The first is to further disparate ideas and opinions that were originally published in limited numbers, usually due to financial restrictions. The second is to inspire and encourage others to create original, undiluted, personal documents that come straight from the heart because there will never be enough of these. *Rudy VanderLans*



The cover

of this issue was designed and printed by BRUCE LICKER at Independent Project Press in Los Angeles, California on September 24th through 27th, 1990. It was printed on a hand-fed Vandercook 219 letterpress on .014 "plain" chipboard. Since the printing took a gruesome four days, a different color was used each day in order to break the monotony of hand-fed printing. Therefore there are four different versions of this cover.

Also...

We are proud to announce the release of the first three Emigre CD's! Many thanks to JOHN WEBER in Columbus, Ohio and BARRY DECK in Los Angeles who, in unofficial A&R capacity, introduced us respectively to James Towning and Every Good Boy. Special thank you to STEPHEN SHARHAN for all his help and insights into the amazing world of recording artists, and BLICK for coming to California, all the way from Holland, to help us manually glue 1000 wrappers around the first Emigre CD.

And...

Thank you DANIEL M. OLSON for unloading "Landscapes & Portraits" on us.

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Emigre #16

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Sound design.

One of the perks of publishing Emigre magazine is that we receive countless numbers of unsolicited printed and recorded material of all kinds. Over the past five years, people have sent us literally hundreds of faxes, magazines, invitations, cassettes, CD's, letters, posters and other ephemera. At first we held on to anything that looked "interesting," but before too long, sheer quantity forced us to be more selective. The selection process we enforced was purely intuitive. Anything that was overly commercial, predictable or obviously ripped off went right into the trash can. Anything that appeared sincere, original and smelled good went into "The Box."

After five years of collecting, we decided to share with you some of the work that we have found to be inspiring, funny, and at times significant. These works of art are not mass-marketed, watered down, censored messages or opinions. They are not projects that are published by committees to satisfy a lowest common denominator audience. Instead, these works, which are often produced in low quantities for specific audiences (friends, small mailing lists, etc.), are usually quite esoteric and highly private. I enjoyed reading the faxes, the undiluted opinions and the cryptic and ambiguous messages that often seemed as if they were created for me alone. And I admired the way that some were produced: often inexpensively and inventively, utilizing simple reproduction methods.

Most of the work reproduced in this issue was created by people who, first and foremost, have a strong desire to either say or sell something. In order to accomplish this, they use the tools and the methods of graphic design, but often in an uneducated or subconscious way, simply to further their messages and not as an end in itself.

An important quality found in some of the pieces is the presence of genuine vernacular styles. Educated graphic designers have appropriated and borrowed vernacular styles time and again, yet the results never quite measure up to these originals. The reason is obvious. You don't use a vernacular style; it is part of you. Vernacular styles cannot be taught in the traditional sense. They are born out of a direct need or out of a particular way of working that is often indigenous to a certain place. Bruce Licher's work is a case in point. His gruff letterpress style evolved from the need to package his records. He bought a second-hand letterpress, taught himself to print, and in the process, created a highly personal approach to graphic design.

While selecting the works for this issue, we have tried to pick those pieces that would least suffer from the process of reproduction. Some depend heavily upon touch and feel and page sequence, qualities that cannot be easily reproduced. In these cases, we photographed the objects in such a way that their three dimensional qualities were apparent, and we apologize beforehand to the artists for poor representation.

With this issue we hope to accomplish two things. The first is to further disperse ideas and opinions that were originally published in limited numbers, usually due to financial restrictions. The second is to inspire and encourage others to create original, undiluted, personal documents that come straight from the heart because there will never be enough of these. **Rudy Vanderliens**



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Thank you **DANIEL M. OLSON** for unloading "Landscapes & Portraits" on us.

James Towning. One day James Towning wrote Emigre the following letter: "Dear Emigre, John Weber kindly recommended me to you regarding your search for recording artists for Emigre Records. I currently operate a small mail order distribution service/label called BLACKmailorder/BLACKmusic for both myself and other recording artist friends. I also do all the graphic design for the packaging and promotion, Fact TwentyTwo is me singing, recording and playing/programming. Cathode Raymonde is my most current endeavor, (released about a month ago) which is mostly instrumental 'odd' things I've recorded over the past couple of months that I felt were straying a little from the Fact TwentyTwo 'sound.' I credited my cats on the instruments just for the heck of it. Anyone who keeps up with all my releases knows it's me anyway. The cassettes enclosed are as follows: 1) *Cathode Raymonde*, the self-titled debut cassette which reveals my passion for the



James' letters.

precision of electronic music to the public. 2) Fact TwentyTwo's *Fantastic Planet*, a 1988 release that still holds my own interest after multiple listenings. Also my first experience with a new 6-track recorder which I've quickly outgrown. 3) Fact TwentyTwo's *The Two Noise Spiral*. This is the most current Fact TwentyTwo offering (apart from a few compilation submissions), featuring a more refined, detailed approach to traditionally structured 'pop' music than previous efforts. It's also the tenth Fact TwentyTwo release in less than five years. Currently in progress is new material from both Fact TwentyTwo and Cathode Raymonde, as well as a retrospective compilation of earlier recordings. Well, I hope you enjoy the music and I look forward to hearing from you soon. Any feedback would be greatly appreciated. All the best, James Towning."

So I listened to the tapes, and I soon realized that it was the most beautifully disturbing music I had heard in a long time. I called him up, and a week later

we had worked out our first recording contract. As simple as that. Shortly after, I interviewed James by phone.



James Towning at home in Columbus, Ohio surrounded by his "not exactly state-of-the-art setup." Photo by TOM STROUD/ICE.

EMIGRE: Just like many innovative musicians, you attended design school. Where did you go to school? **JAMES:** I attended the Columbus College of Art and Design and graduated about five years ago. **EMIGRE:** And you're working as a graphic designer right now? **JAMES:**

EMIGRE: Has any of your music been released by other record companies?

JAMES: No. I've had a few songs on some compilation albums, but that's about it.

EMIRE: What I like about your music is that it never quite fulfills the expectations it creates. A nice rhythm will start, a catchy melody will develop, but just as I become aware of it, something happens and the rhythm will change or some unfamiliar sound will surface. It's entirely unpredictable. Your music is also very fragmented and layered, very much like a lot of graphic design I see today.

JAMES: The parallels you can draw between electronic music and electronically-generated graphics are very strong. I really started noticing these parallels ever since designers started scanning images. Sometimes I think of my music as bitmapped music - low resolution, jagged

Freddy the Bastard.

Freddy the Bastard from Gainesville, Florida distributed a handful of copies of Emigre #9 among his friends and relatives. We're not certain how successful Freddy's distribution efforts were, we've lost all contact, but we are convinced that his flyers are of singular originality. Following is a sample of typical **Freddy correspondence**. Also printed on this page are two promotional flyers.

"wow i just realized i might have pneumonia, that would really suck this time of year cos i just quit working so now i'm interviewing w/rec stores and attempting to push my 'hobby' full-time ... i watched a man stroll into a house last night about three a.m. he doesn't live there ... sorta wandering but he asked for a quarter to help get a cup of coffee then invited us to his upcoming family reunion and mentioned that our band could possibly perform ... tough ... i came back from atlanta/tallahassee/memphis yesterday my apartment is still the same no heat and rooms full of clutter i guess its the way of the new generation ... believe it or not i sold my copy of no. 9 at a record convention to some big 4ad followers ... now i can't even review it unless its straight from memory-guess its time for the bottle ... with any luck upon this shipment's arrival i'll have the necessary greenstuffs ... thank for sending the info on bulk orders ... there's a lot more of your material i'll surely snatch up in the near future ... "

freddy.

whether you've been chasing dreams or chasing cops, after an engaging day of illusory adventure one needs solid gripping literature to mix with those pills...for a whirlwind list you might wanna throw away of beer stained magazines, warped discs and stolen videos write:



page on your fucking face distribution
c/o freddy the bastard
po box 14932
gainesville, fl 32604

Tim Canny are co-publishers, co-editors, co-creative directors, co-productions managers and co-hosts in the publication of *Choplog*. Tim lives in Cincinnati, Ohio and Eric lives in Brooklyn, New York. They will be coming out with a "fisher" of *Choplog* sometime this year. Future releases include a Hypercard issue and a T-shirt issue.

Fig. 1 *Continued*

CHOPLOGIC'S SUBJECT
CONFIDENTIAL SOURCE
WENT SINCE WORK IN
TRAIN TRIP FROM
HOME. TRAILS TO
LEWIS. CAC AND
HIS FORM. LATE
SOME OF THE PLACES
HE VISITED ON THAT
TRIP. SOURCE SAYS
THE 4. 21. 68. AKA.
OF RAN COINAGE
FROM HIS HOME IN
SCHWARTZ, AND
HIS WIFE IS
PRESENTLY WITH
THEIR OTHER CHILD

[illegible]

Figure 1. A 3D plot showing the relationship between the three variables: the number of species (Y-axis), the number of individuals (X-axis), and the number of communities (Z-axis). The plot shows a positive correlation between the number of species and the number of individuals, and a negative correlation between the number of species and the number of communities.

goes as the train goes goes the train as goes the train
 goes as the train goes the train GITE ATTILIANO-BORMAZO ORVETO goes
 goes the train here the CHIESI TERONTOLA-CORTONA train there
 going ARZIZO PONTICINO LATINA VIA BUCINE MONTEVARCHI goes
 FIORENTINE VALGAREMO INCISA here goes the train going going
 SUD ELIZIO PONTASSIEVE COMPIOBBI FIRENZE VERNIO & going
 the train going there goes the train going as the train
 GRIZZANA MAGNANO/VADO PINERO BOLOGNA LAVINO goes there
 goes going the train go the train ANCONA DELL'EMILIA as
 as the train goes goes the train as going the the SAMOGGIA
 CASTELFRANCO FIORENZA PIACENZA LODI TANZANO NEUGEMANO so
 as the train is going goes the train as the train going
 goes MILANO train VAREZZO PARASATO there the CAMBRATE
 train it goes goes the train BUSO ARSIZIO GALLARATI goes
 there goes the train it CASORATE SOMMA LOMBARDO going &
 going as it the train is VERGATE SESTO CALENDE so goes
 as DICHIARELLO ARONA REINA LESA SELLAPELLE STRESA SAVONA
 the train there going the train there going the train
 & going the train as ANCONA/LATINA the train is going
 goes the train ARSIZIO/GOZZO the train goes the train GUZZANO
 BRESCELLO going the train o the train there goes o o o
 o o the train VOGGONA slate roofs and slate walls the
 train, goes BURSA-CARREZZA goes the train COMODOLILLA so
 goes the trains going going going going PREGLIA VAREZO &
 as the train goes TELLE it the train it goes the train
 there HELVETIA SCHWEIZ SUISSE SVIZZERA SWITZERLAND goes
 the train it goes going the train as the train goes the
 train goes so it goes BRIG as it goes LALON AUSSERROD
 HONTENY o the train goes as the train goes so o o o o
 it goes GORRENSTEN (LORENZENTHAL) it goes as the train
 goes so the train goes as the train KANDERSGEE BLAUSEE
 NITNICE so as the train does as the train so does go
 o so the train goes KANDERSGEE the train FROTHEN goes
 as the train is going so the train WENGI REICHENMACH
 as the train go MUELSSEN HUESTROFF-ENTROFF it goes SPETZ so
 as the train goes so GANTZ ZUGERSCHWANDEN goes SPETZ so
 goes into the train as the train goes through OTTIGNON the good
 train goes as goes thru goes the train KIESSEN MUELSSEN
 as it goes going it goes going go go so o o o o o
 MUELSSEN GUTTENBERG the train goes so train OSTERNMUNDEN
 goes the train as the train goes so the train goes goes
 as it goes as till the train going so it goes stops NE

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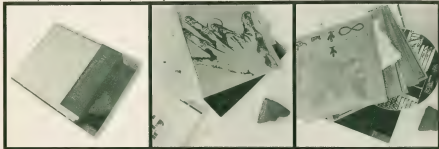
those waters than the freshwater water used

YOU ARE HERE



Stephen Sheehan.

"Power in the House began tentatively as a comp. at one of a bunch of area musicians. It quickly expanded into a compilation CD/tape of not only musical works, but visual ones as well. A project representing local musicians was an idea I'd had for about two years. It's not a new idea. There has been support for samplers like these for awhile. The most well-knowns are probably the ongoing Stereo Poetry Systems compilations and the Tellur Audio Cassette series, both from New York. The lack of such compilation projects in our area made me wonder what the local musicians in up Is, the one who might be intimidated by the music publishing process, the one who may only be a songwriter/composer and sees no point in performing his or her original music in a bar or lounge. The question of whether a free makes noise when he can hear it tell somewhat applies here: can music exist if it is not heard on the radio, in a shopping mall, elevator, or bar? Is music responsible only for entertaining a listener? When does music stop being music?" This excerpt was taken from the introduction to *Power in the House*, an ambitious multi-media project conceived and produced by Stephen Sheehan with the assistance of the Collaborative Arts Project in Omaha, Nebraska. This elaborately packaged compilation (see below) consists of 75 minutes of music from 41 artists on either CD or cassette, 25 screenprints from 25 designers, artists and writers and a chunk of rubble from the Jobber's Canyon warehouse district in downtown Omaha (where most of the contributors lived and which has been demolished by the ConAgra Corporation to make way for its new corporate headquarters). *Power in the House* is only one of the many projects that Stephen Sheehan has been involved with over the years. He was a member of the now defunct band Digital Sex, recorded solo material and is now recording and touring with his new band The World.



EMIGRE: How many copies of *Power in the House* did you manufacture and how well did they sell? STEPHEN: We made a total of 1,000 copies: 500 versions on CD and 500 on chrome cassette. Since its release in 1988, the CDs have almost completely sold out, and we have a few hundred of the cassettes left over. Altogether, we sold roughly 750 copies. EMIGRE: How much did you sell them for? STEPHEN: We sold them each for \$5, so it was a lot of value for the price. EMIGRE: Yes, that's cheap! Did you break even? STEPHEN: Almost, but the main goal for this project was to elevate the profile of local musicians and local visual artists with the intent to at least recoup all of the expenses. It was all made possible by a grant from an organization called the "Collaborative Arts Project." EMIGRE: Did you realize your goal? STEPHEN: Oh, yes. As far as elevating the profile, we received reviews not only throughout America, but throughout Europe. Even recently, I read a reference to *Power in the House* in a recent review of a local group called Atomic Breathing.

EMIGRE: Although I enjoyed the CD, the problem I have with a project like this is its anonymity. For me, in order to like an artist, I have to get to know them, grow up with them, so to speak, and in the process learn to understand them better. But with a project like *Power in the House*, there are many artists thrown together and the only thing they have in common is the fact that they're all from Omaha, Nebraska. Is that enough to justify a project like *Power in the House*? Did you recognize that as a problem yourself?

STEPHEN: No, not really. Aside from wanting to expose the work from this area, from a musical perspective, *Power in the House* still had to sound coherent from beginning to end. We selected work from over 100 submissions, and we had no idea what the result ultimately would sound like. Although there were very different styles of music involved, I was certain that all these tracks could be sequenced in a way that would be coherent and even conceptual.

EMIGRE: Was this project intended to put Omaha on the map of music? STEPHEN: That never occurred to me. That would be a bit ambitious. It would be difficult to do with Omaha. As far as music is concerned, I have no idea what kind of an image this city has.

EMIGRE: What do you think? STEPHEN: Well, I can be realistic. Of all the music that has ever come out of this area, the group Mannheim Steamroller is probably best known. Outside of that, in the 60's there was a group from Lincoln called Zager and Evans. They had a huge international hit called "In the Year 2525." But that about covers the music scene here in Omaha. And that has been a frustrating element of living here and making music. There have been hundreds of groups and musicians but most have not stayed together longer than just an album or two.

EMIGRE: Would you undertake a project like this again? STEPHEN: I think so. It would be different, though. I think I would reduce the number of people that would be included. I might consider including more bands or groups, especially groups that tour, so people would have an opportunity to eventually become more familiar with the music. The majority of the music on *Power in the House* came from individual composers and writers who don't perform live on a regular basis. It was mostly an opportunity to bring the work from people who work privately into a public arena.

EMIGRE: Do you think there is potential for these very elaborate projects that feature, for the most part, unknown musicians? Is it financially and commercially feasible? STEPHEN: I think so. I think



Stephen Sheehan. Photo by Thom Wilson/Photo



that *Power in the House* has set the pace for subsequent projects. I think that anything that continued in its footsteps would automatically have a certain recognition based on the heritage of P.I.T.H. But it's not a guarantee for success. We haven't made money yet, though we're getting closer and closer to actually recouping the cost. We are still seeing money from distributors coming in, and we probably will for a year or so.

EMIGRE: What's Post-Ambient Motion's function these days? saw that the Anomic Breathing record was distributed through Post-Ambient Motion. STEPHEN: For the most part, Post-Ambient Motion serves as an umbrella organization for whatever it is I'm involved with. It can be a record label, distributor, a production company, and I've even promoted a few concerts. EMIGRE: As a distribution company what

does Post-Ambient Motion do for Anomic Breathing? STEPHEN: Because of the contacts that I've made in the past, I can find distributors more quickly and easily than the band could and convince the distributors to take something, even if they have not heard of it. It is very difficult for new artists to establish themselves and it's becoming harder and harder. Distributors have only so much room on their shelves. They have to make decisions and prioritize what they will carry. The chances are greater that they will carry something from someone or some label that they have carried in the past.

EMIGRE: I have a silly question that I'm almost too embarrassed to ask, but why aren't you famous yet? STEPHEN: That's an interesting question. Fame is something that is relative. I'm sure I have some degree of notoriety to certain people in certain circles, particularly in Europe. Whether or not that constitutes fame, I don't know. I suppose the one thing that people might always associate me with is the fact that I'm from the heartland of America, which is not always known for people who consistently release music, especially in the style that I do. EMIGRE: It never seemed to have bothered the B-52's to come from Athens, Georgia or Nine Inch Nails to come from Cleveland, Ohio. You were involved with Digital Sex, Missionary Position, and now it's The World, and you have released EP's and CDs under your own name, as well. Do you think that because you have released your own music through so many different bands and projects, people might lose track and maybe interest? Could that have worked to your disadvantage? STEPHEN: I would never really know. It's never been intentional. Whatever happened was dictated by the circumstances at the time. It might have made it a little more difficult for people to find out who was involved. But that's where Post-Ambient Motion comes in. Whatever project I'm involved with, Post-Ambient Motion will always be mentioned. In a sense, that is some sort of guarantee of authenticity.

EMIGRE: Have you ever considered putting all your energy into making music and going for broke? STEPHEN: I have, and that is exactly what would happen: I would go broke. Back in the days of Digital Sex, there were many occasions when I wondered if I was doing too much, and whether everything was being compromised, and whether I should concentrate on the music only. But as time passed, I realized that I understood and enjoyed everything that I was doing: whether it was recording music, writing lyrics, being on the telephone, or trying to distribute, etc., etc. It all can be done, and it all can be done effectively and with care. There are other instances and people who have proved that it can be done, and with little or no compromise. Philip Glass is an example. Being involved with all aspects of the music industry puts you in a unique position that can really be beneficial. How many artists know the people that are distributing their records and can actually call them up and talk to them?

EMIGRE: In an earlier conversation we had, you were quite excited about your new project, The World. How is The World going to succeed where Digital Sex didn't? STEPHEN: I have mixed emotions about Digital Sex. For all the good that we did achieve, there was an equal amount that we did not deliver. We realized only 50% of what we could have. We put out our own music on Post-Ambient Motion, and we were able to find a sympathetic ear with Sordide Sentimental in Rouen, France. They liked the music enough to release it on CD and take a chance. That helped to solidify our music and it also was an affirmation to us that what we were doing was good, not only for our ears but also for other people's ears. That was an important step. What we didn't achieve was that we didn't last as long as we could have. We didn't realize a lot of goals. EMIGRE: What went wrong?

STEPHEN: At times it was a very fragile, uneasy situation between different personalities. The elements that got in the way of Digital Sex's further progress were ego, substance abuse, denial and delusional thinking. As a result, there wasn't a unified vision.

EMIGRE: Maybe it was those feelings that provided the inspiration for some very nice, emotional music. STEPHEN: I don't doubt that, but that's not the way I choose to live my life. I do not accept the notion that tension or anxiety is required for making good music. There was a high level of naivete involved, and I'm certain that was a large part of the charm of the music. We knew our limitations and we knew what we could create within them. As you continue to work, in any medium, you supposedly get better at what you do. However, I don't necessarily believe that because you become more skilled at what you do, you have to sacrifice innocence. I think you can still call that up. That's really the concept behind the title of "Innocence at Will" (a compilation CD of Stephen's music). It means trying to remain as impressionable as possible.

And I don't need to take drugs
or live a ragged lifestyle
to accomplish that.

Nick Bell.

"Dear Emigre, Here is an independent artist who is the only graphic designer to have worked for Slobhan Keane. Trouble is, many think I still am. I am alone, and trying to let everyone know I exist. I thought that maybe you could help."

"Six Mental Wounds" - symptoms of a disoriented world.

Text: Extracts from a letter written by J. S. Poskitt - 30 June 1992

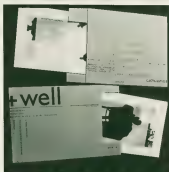
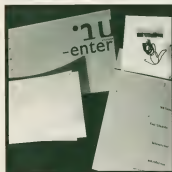
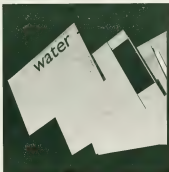
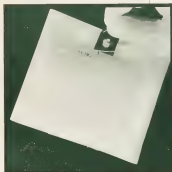
Extracts from W. S. Yeats

Each piece plays

Design and photography

Nick Bell.

Handmade and packaged
in England.



VEX.

VEX (see next page), the counterculture magazine that Robert Farrell Hold designed and co-wrote, was a well-executed departure from the run of the mill papers in the vague category "hip art and fashion." Cynical and satirical, it made fun of "posing," self-conscious hipness and the uselessness of the everyday. We at Enigra got a few issues and always appreciated the fresh approach of the design, as well as the editorial. We don't know what he's doing now, but he continues to create interesting mailing pieces (see below) to intrigue us.

DNV 685

ROBERT FARRELL HOLD

PO BOX 410224 S.F. CA

415 + 6 4 1 - 0 5

COMBAT MEDIOCRITY

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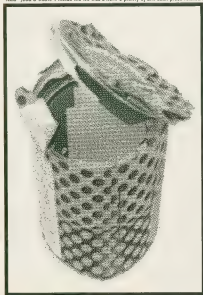
Cactus.

into the office it came, smelling like paint. We knew not whence it came, only that this huge silkscreened poster was murmbling something about an artists collective, an international network of students. The poster was comprised of the word "CACTUS" in large letters and then 'network' across the bottom, and perforated cards. In 98H languages, meant to be torn out and returned to their headquarters in England. The cards read, "Cactus is a mail art network for students across East and West Europe. The aim is to enable students to visually express their views and ideas to an audience of wide cultural variety. Each issue is produced in an edition of 50 every 3 months based on a given theme. The project is non-commercial and restricted only by the postal system. If you are interested please return this slip or a postcard with your address to: 28 Birch House, Tulse Hill Estate, Brighton, SW2 2ET, London, England, and we will send you the next brief." Well, the

days turned into weeks, the weeks into a month, and we got another package from the Brighton collective. It was a food tin, wrapped in paper and its label read "food & waste". Inside the tin was a horn's plenty of art. Each piece related somehow to this theme. One of my favorite pieces was a bundle sealed in a plastic bag. You opened the bag, unfolded the layers of paper, wax, and tin foil, and there lay an advertisement picture of a hunk of swiss cheese and a glass of wine proclaiming, "The natural taste of craftsmanship". Some of the pieces were more obviously political, others more abstract. One was a tract titled, "Give Up Art Save The Starving."

It was a brilliant essay dethroning art from its exalted status and accusing it of being a killer. A condensation:

"Art is the glamorous escape, the transformation that shields us from the world we live in. Injustice, endemic disease, famine, war, these are real. Art has replaced religion as the opiate of the people just as the artist has replaced the priest as the spokesman of the spirit. Once men reached inside themselves to find God. Now they find art...It is ironic that that the myth of the artist celebrates suffering while it is those who have never heard of art, the poor and wretched of our earth, who truly suffer. To call one man an artist is to deny another the equal right of vision...Seeing and creating are the same activity. Those who create art are also creating the starving...Give up art. Save the starving."



Two pieces from the "Food & Waste" tin. Top: Artist unknown. Bottom: Journal de l'Art

THE BREAD CODE

- 1 Buy only as much bread as you know you will need. Don't buy a large loaf if a small one will do.
- 2 Don't ask for bread in a restaurant unless you mean to eat it.
- 3 Learn how to keep bread fresh; it should be wrapped in a clean, dry cloth, and kept in a dry place. If you use a bin, see that it lets in air—either by airholes or keeping the lid closed.
- 4 If it spite of your care, your bread gets stale, use them up in sandwiches—or, as a last resort, put them in the pig's bin. Never, never put these in the dustbin.

Issued by Ministry of Food

June 1946 6470/55

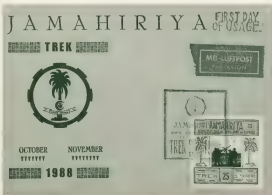


Bruce Licher. "Presently located on the second floor of the Nate Starkman & Son Building in downtown Los Angeles, Independent Project Records is growing, changing and expanding. Its first release in March 1980 was *Project 197*, a 7" EP of various song fragments and sound experiments created as a requirement for an Independent Project course (hence the name of the label) in the College of Fine Art at UCLA. Since then, IPB has for the most part remained true to its original intent - that of creating records as an artistic medium. Not only do we take extra care in maintaining the creative integrity of the music we choose to release, but we also pay special attention to the way that the music is packaged and presented to the world. We feel that all parts of the release are important, and our goal is to create a balanced and unified whole." So reads the introduction to one of the many mail order catalogs we have received from Independent Project Records & Press. Emigre spoke to Bruce Licher about the joys and pitfalls that come with his trade.



Bruce Licher at the Shattuck House, one of the two independent Independent Project Press workshops in 1980, and the workshop of the show "Photograph by Don't Know"

84 | New Independent Project Records and Press



EMIGRE: What are you working on currently? BRUCE: We're doing mostly outside work at the moment. We're printing business cards for Virgin Records and we're doing some note paper and envelopes for one of the landlords in our building, which we're having a lot of trouble with. EMIGRE: Are you getting more involved with commercial printing? BRUCE: Well, the outside work is pretty much what's been paying the bills ever since I moved in here in 1984. I try to do as much of my own work as possible, but in the past few years I've been finding less and less time to do that. I'm currently negotiating a new distribution deal for Independent Project Records. Once we work out a good contract, it will enable me to concentrate on releasing music again and create more of the hand-printed record packages, which is really why I set the press up in the first place.



Bruce Licher: Bruce Licher's letterpress room (with a hand letterpress type)

letterpress. Letterpress gives you this non-commercial one-of-a-kind quality, yet it doesn't generate an overly "artsy" feeling. With letterpress you get the best of both worlds. You can turn an album cover, which is a commercial object, into a work of art, and that's really what I've been trying to do ever since I started the record company. EMIGRE: You don't think you could have realized unique results with offset printing? BRUCE: I don't think so. With offset there are certain tangible qualities missing. I like the way letterpress feels. There are designers, like Vaughan Oliver at 4AD records for instance, who are producing beautiful artwork with offset printing. Actually, in the last few years, in order to keep my record company going, I was often forced to do album covers in offset. And it was really funny, because here I'd been doing album covers for four or five years and I had never actually laid out an album cover to be printed offset. I didn't know how to prepare the mechanicals.

EMIGRE: You never took any graphic design classes when you were in school? BRUCE: When I was at UCLA, I was a design major for one year and I quit the design major and moved over to fine arts. This was before I'd ever taken a graphic design class. I had first taken a number of design theory classes, and got really turned off because I realized that doing graphic design meant doing art for other people as opposed to doing it for yourself. You had to please other people first. In one particular instance, we were to design a logo for the student art show. Everybody in the class designed logos and the instructor decided that one of the logo's I had designed was the best. It made me feel

INTERVIEW CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

In the background, the Savage Republic logo.

"From his beginnings in the art scene at UCLA in the late seventies, Bruce Licher has taken his art into the arena of business and found that he was right: people appreciate finding art where they least expect it. Because his work exists without the trappings of the fine art world, it is especially challenging and gratifying. Perhaps the reason for his venture into non-art realms is that in this way his work is more potentially capable of expressing his insights into personal freedom." (From the catalog *Bruce Licher: The Ten Year Retrospective*.)

THANK YOU

for putting your order
in our garage.



We believe your order
prior to Independent
Project staff and
that we'll never forget
you, again, about

"Thank You" Postcard

INDEPENDENT PROJECT
RECORDS & MORE



great. But then he said, "Okay, everybody will now work on this one and make it better." It didn't work, it got worse. That whole experience made me question whether I wanted to be a graphic designer. I don't want to do my work only to make other people happy, I want to make myself happy. That's the most important thing, then other people will be made happy if they appreciate what I do. And that's essentially what's happened.

With a lot of the work that I get, if people want me to design something, they'll just say, "Hey, I love what you do. This is the information that needs to be on it; just go to it." EMIGRE: So you get free ads from your clients? BRUCE: Yes, usually. The only problem is that most clients who give me free rein don't have much of a budget either.

EMIGRE: Independent Projects started more or less in school. How did you

get to the point that you're at now, where you seem to be making money with very artistic and personal work? Was there a particular moment that you realized that Independent Projects had certain commercial possibilities?

BRUCE: The Women's Graphic Center had a letterpress shop that was available to the students. For a very reasonable monthly studio fee, you could use the equipment on off-hours. I did that for about a year and a half and during that period, I printed three or four album covers and a lot of Savage Republic postcards and other ephemera. As that work was getting out into the world, people started asking me if I could print for them. At the end of 1983, it got to the point where I realized I needed to get my own space and my own shop. I borrowed money from a friend, went out to buy the equipment, found space in an old warehouse in downtown Los Angeles and moved in. Up until about six months before that, I had had a parttime job at UCLA as a delivery person. I made just enough to survive and had enough free time to do anything I wanted to do. But then, at the end of the summer of 1983, I decided I was really going to make an effort to spend all my time on the record company and make a living doing that, not exactly realizing just how that was going to happen.

EMIGRE: If you had known beforehand how difficult it was to start your own record company, you might have never tried.

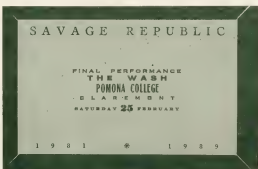
BRUCE: That's probably true. I ended up having to sell a lot of my stuff. For the first year that I had my shop downtown, I lived in my office; a fifteen by fifteen square foot office on the second floor of a warehouse.

EMIGRE: But the idea for your company was to release records and the printing was subservient to that?

BRUCE: Yes, that was the initial idea. The original idea behind Independent Project Records was to do records as fine art. I did the first one when I was a student at UCLA. I took what was called an independent project course, which basically means that the student more or less picks a project to work on individually, under the guidance of an instructor. During that term I made a 7" record. I recorded the music with friends, then I pressed it up, silk-screened labels and made a photo postcard.

EMIGRE: How do you go about getting your records pressed? BRUCE: You look in the yellow pages and you find the listing for records/phonograph manufacturers, and you call up a few of them and ask for their price lists. SAUCER: And then you pay them money,

(INTERVIEW CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE)



TOP: BY KENNETH COLEMAN; POSTCARDS: KENNETH COLEMAN

and they deliver the records to you? **BRUCE:** Exactly. It's quite an intricate process, though. You have to have the master tape copied onto a master lacquer, and then that master lacquer needs to be sent out to be plated and that gives you the pressing plate. Then you take that to the record manufacturing company and they'll press your records. **EMIGRE:** How did you get the master tapes made? **BRUCE:** Those you have to make in a recording studio. I had a friend who worked at the audio-visual service at UCLA. Essentially, we recorded that first record in the offices of the audio-visual service on a four-track tape machine. So it didn't really cost anything. It was pretty crude but interesting. Once I'd done that first record I had to do another one. I had no idea where it would take me. It's probably to my detriment, but I've never really looked at the big picture. I've always gone straight ahead thinking, "Okay, what's next?"

EMIGRE: In one of the promotional brochures of Independent Projects you wrote that "Eventually we may be able to get to the point where we can release all the music we would like." What kind of music were you thinking of? **BRUCE:** Well ... music that I like -- music that means something to me. At this point, most of the releases are of other people's music. There are a number of groups that I've been working with whose music touches something inside me that I can relate to. **EMIGRE:** These groups present themselves to you? **BRUCE:** There have been a couple of groups that I listened to and approached. I tell them that I really like their music and that I would like to work with them and make a record. **EMIGRE:** What is your function at that point? **BRUCE:** Mostly production, although I usually don't go into the studio to produce the music. Most of the artists know how to do that, or have someone they like to work with in that capacity. I produce the physical product. Usually they present me with finished tapes. I will then work with them to find an artistic and honest way to present their music. My function is to collaborate with them. **EMIGRE:** But in the end the idea is to sell these records and make money, right? **BRUCE:** Yes, of course, the idea is that this would support me and the other people who I would work with, that's where I need to go. However, the reality, up to this point, is that it hasn't. The outside printing work has been supporting the record company for the past four or five years.

EMIGRE: What do you think is your biggest problem in making the record company work financially? **BRUCE:** One of the biggest problems is that what sells, in general, is not necessarily what I am interested in. However, I have a feeling that a number of the groups that I am interested in right now are getting to the point where they could be accessible to a larger audience. I think for the first time it is possible that the record company could support itself, but what it needs is a good distribution and promotion setup.

EMIGRE: Now that Savage Republic doesn't exist anymore, are you looking for other outlets for your musical talents? **BRUCE:** I am planning on doing my own music. But I feel I need to get the necessary mechanism set up in such a way that when I get to the point where I am ready to release more of my own music, it can be distributed properly. **EMIGRE:** You wear all these different hats. Do you ever feel you're spreading your energies too thin? **BRUCE:** All the time. That's why I let go of Savage Republic and the Nate Starkman project, which was another record label I had started a couple of years back. I realized I had to focus my energies and do what was most important to me.

EMIGRE: How much of your income comes from the Independent Projects catalog? **BRUCE:** Not a whole lot. I am working on a comprehensive catalog that is more informative. It describes more specifically each item we sell. I think that too often people who receive our catalogs have no idea what it all is.

EMIGRE: How about the people who do buy your products? What do you



Cover for Savage Republic Ltd., JAMAHERIYA



technique designed by three design (stand without) for the Craft and Arts Museum, Los Angeles, printed by Bruce Liech

INDEPENDENT PROJECTS

A 10 YEAR RETROSPECTIVE
OF CREATIVE WORK BY
BRUCE LICHER

MA * 18 THRU 13 TH MAY
1999

THE HALLWAY GALLERY

1307 PALMETTO STREET * LOS ANGELES, CA, 90013

Never for a small poster

Licher went about doing business at IPB in ways uniquely his own. On an insert to the first album released on his label, Savage Republic's *Tragic Aligned*, Licher expressed his feelings about some of the inherent practices of larger record companies.

"Regarding the music on this record. Please feel free to play or broadcast this record for any reason, we trust your good intentions. Please also feel free to create tape recordings of the music for your own personal use and enjoyment. Should you wish to use any of these recordings for any other purpose, please contact us through Independent Project Records. We will be happy to work something out. These recordings are not created as we feel that you who, as be able to deal with human beings, not businessmen. Thanks for your interest."

fans have commented on liking this aspect. The music we release is made by people, in a lot of cases kids, who just want to make their own music, music that means something to them and at the same time means something to me. **EMIGRE:** Do you think that there is a big enough audience to support such personal ideals? **BRUCE:** You have to make people aware that this music exists, and that remains difficult to do. Once the distribution and promotion are set up properly, I am confident that there is a big enough audience to support us. We have recently been making phone calls to record stores, trying to sell items from our current catalog, and it's amazing to find how many people that sell this type of music are familiar with and have a lot of respect for our label. Even the major record companies. Earlier this year, we approached a lot of major labels trying to get some kind of support. And again, we found within most companies at least one or two people who knew about us and thought it'd be great to work with us. Unfortunately, the persons who make the actual decisions are always looking for music that is more immediately commercial, so not much has come out of it yet.

EMIGRE: Have you been able to bypass distributors and sell your records di-

INTERVIEW CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

SAVAGE REPUBLIC

ANGELUSIA - WALKING BACKWARDS
A THOUSAND DASH - MEDITERRANEA
CORVUS - CEREMONIAL
THE YEAR OF SOLE - LAND OF DELUSION

EXACTLY 1000



Richard D. Wright Records

think people are attracted to? Why do you think people like your work? **BRUCE:** I've always looked for a certain originality and integrity in the music. The music I release is very different in attitude than typical rock and roll, which I really dislike. And our

rectly to stores? **BRUCE:** We've just started doing this and we've been quite successful so far. There are a number of other independent labels who have been doing it very successfully. At this point, we're trying to distribute the back catalog. We wouldn't want to sell any of our new releases directly to the stores because we feel confident enough that once we have the new distribution arrangement worked out, the distributor will be able to handle it better than we can.

ENIGRE: When you sell directly to stores, is it on consignment? **BRUCE:** No, the only thing we offer is C.O.D. They have to pay for the products when they get them. Some stores actually prefer buying directly from us, often have relationships with distributors that they work with and don't want to bypass them.

ENIGRE: Are you still involved with Camper Van Beethoven? **BRUCE:** I did the design for their last two album covers on Virgin Records. When they signed to Virgin, they came to me and asked if I wanted to design their covers. This time they had a nice budget. **ENIGRE:** You designed the covers to be offset printed, though? **BRUCE:** Yes. Actually, for the first album cover that I designed for them through Virgin, I created all the art work on the press, the way I would normally create artwork, and then I just gave them the printed thing from the letterpress as the artwork.

ENIGRE: Is that the Telephone Free Landslide Victory cover? **BRUCE:** No, the first cover I did like this was Our Beloved Revolutionary Sweetheart, although Telephone was done the same way. I did the first two editions of Telephone in runs of 100 handprinted copies each; they were collector's items. Once we licensed that record to Rough Trade in San Francisco, they mass-produced them in effieet. The last album that I did for Camper was Key Line Ate, where the only thing that was done on letterpress was the type.

ENIGRE: If you had to give up one or the other, which would you continue doing, the music or the press? **BRUCE:** I would have to give up the music. It's the press that's paying the bills. But I don't see myself giving up either. I can't do without one or the other.

I'd get bored real fast

doing just one thing.

the telephone

more artwork for Camper Van Beethoven album Key Line Ate



Capitol Records



CAMP VAN BEETHOVEN

Madam X. One of the rewards of being on Madam X's magazine will be to be included in the "Human Being Society" a division of Madam X. No small favor, considering that membership entitles you to all the privileges and responsibilities of being human.

Human Being Society Membership Card

HUMAN BEING SOCIETY
LIFE MEMBER

ON THE
THE MYSTERY OF
NATURE



ABOUT NATURE, TAKE IT
A GOOD, HEALTHY LOOK

★ Madam X's RIZET ★
**POLICE STOP
BLIND MOTORIST ON
HIGHWAY OF LIFE**



MAN'S VOICE HEARD



"We're all blind"

"We want
to see."



"We want
money."



★ ★ ★ PAZET ★ ★ ★
**MYSTERIOUS
VOICE IS HEARD**

"Where are you going?"



"We forgot to think
about it" replied the leader.

WORLD IS A MIRROR OF
TRUE LOVE



ABOUT LOVE, TAKE IT
A GOOD, HEALTHY LOOK

★ Madam X's RAZET ★

MAN IN LOVE
War disappears
as respect reigns.
HAPPY MAN



Spirits rise as
communication
and sharing
increase.

BRAVE MAN ADMITS
"I'm only human"

BRAVE NATION ADMITS

"We don't know everything"

BRAVE WORLD ADMITS

"We're all in this together"



**SCIENCE
IN LOVE**

Doctors cure fear
and anger with
TRUE LOVE.

**PRISONERS
FREED**

Man, a slave of
mind for centuries,
now has the
freedom to feel.

**DREAMS
COME TRUE!**

Real man takes
over as dreamer
awakes.

★ Madam X's RAZET ★

ORDER OR CHAOS

Man amazed as love takes form.



Every Good Boy.

There are numerous examples of people who first went to art school to study design and later became highly successful musicians. Brian Ferry and David Byrne come to mind immediately. Erik Beery, one of the creative forces behind the Chicago-based band Every Good Boy, reversed this trend. Erik has a degree in musical composition from Northern Illinois University, but after graduating became a graphic designer. At this point in his career, working as a graphic designer is what pays the bills. However, with the release of the first Every Good Boy CD, titled *Social Grooves*, things are bound to change. After years of collaborating musically with long-time friend & producer Brian Beck, they seem to have found their groove. But Erik is not about to give up design quite yet. The two professionals merged perfectly when Erik and designer Barry Beck collaborated on the design of the Every Good Boy CD cover. I have seldom seen a record or CD cover that so perfectly represents the music.

EW: Erik, you work as a graphic designer. Do you work for a studio? **ERIK:** Right now I'm working for myself, trying to maintain my integrity, which pretty much disqualifies me from doing certain types of corporate design work. I've been able over the last two years to come to the point where I can do what I like to do, and make a living.

EMIGRE: Did you attend design school? **ERIK:** No, I attended music school. **EMIGRE:** How did you get involved with graphic design after studying music? **ERIK:** Several years ago, started out answering the phone in a design office. Then I did production, ran the repro camera, read a lot of design books and basically had to lie and cheat my way into the business. I've paid my dues.

EMIGRE: Sounds like the perfect design education to me! **ERIK:** My intention is to prove the uselessness of an undergraduate design education. With the exception of CalArts, RISD and Cranbrook, most schools teach you nothing of what the real world is like. **EMIGRE:** If you had to choose between music and graphic design, which would be your true passion? **ERIK:** I grew up with music. It was in my family. I have grandparents who were musicians all their lives, but my father is an interior designer and painter. So I've been subjected to both forms of art ever since I was a baby. It would be difficult to choose.

EMIGRE: You both studied music, didn't you? **BRIAN:** I studied musical performance. **EMIGRE:** What is that? **BRIAN:** I have a degree in playing drums. **EW:** You can get a degree in that? **BRIAN:** Well, actually it's a degree in playing percussion. **EMIGRE:** I didn't know that could be taught. I thought you had to be born with that. **BRIAN:** You have to be born with a certain aptitude. But I didn't really study playing just drums, I played a lot of marimba and vibraphone and steel drum. **EMIGRE:** Where was that? **BRIAN:** At Northern Illinois University. That's where I met Erik; we were roommates.

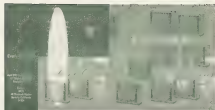
EMIGRE: Erik, do graphic design and music overlap in any way? **ERIK:** I studied musical composition, which is almost like graphic design, except you use notes instead of words. That's why I could make the transition into graphic design. In both areas you have to be aware of the big picture, which



Logo design for Every Good Boy's Social Grooves CD was good job by Erik Beery and Barry Beck.



EMIGRE RECORDS



you narrow down and divide up into smaller pictures that you then work with. **BRIAN:** Composition is a contrived process. You have to have little melodic nuggets in your head in order to make it work, and not everyone has that. Erik has nuggets bouncing and rattling around in his head all the time. Me, on the other hand, I don't have any.

EMIGRE: Have you, Brian, been mostly involved with music since graduating? **BRIAN:** Yes, music and safety grating, and a lot of warehouse work. I also worked as a mover with the Chicago Student Movers, and I was a produce man at a health food store. These are the sorts of side professions you have to cultivate if you are trying to make a profession out of making music.

EMIGRE: But you have been involved, in one capacity or another, with quite a few bands?

BRIAN: Once I built a studio, I had offers to join lots of different bands. It's funny how that happens, isn't it?

EMIGRE: What is Idful Music?

BRIAN: Idful Music is a production company that was formed around the idea of having a colloquium of like-minded music producers. Right now it is comprised of Brad Wood, Dan Sonis and myself. We thought that the only way we were going to get a chance to produce people was if we had our own production facility. We actually own the studio, but the intention was not to own and operate a facility and cater to every client's need. The idea was to get into a situation that offered us the opportunity to produce music that we felt a certain kinship with. That required building a studio that bands could afford. The Chicago studio market is almost entirely devoted to making jingles and it's a very hostile environment to try to make music in.

EMIGRE: Is Every Good Boy an example of how close you want to be involved as a producer with a band? You are actually a member of Every Good Boy, aren't you? **BRIAN:** Producing a band from within is a comfortable thing for me to do. But I don't force my influence where it is not needed or wanted. Many of the bands I work with require very accurate documenting and nothing more. Basically, the more I do this, the better I'm able to tell what needs to be done.

EMIGRE: How long has

Every Good Boy been around? **BRIAN:** The three core members, Erik, Randy and I, used to be in a band together in college. That band lasted for about two years, and eventually evolved into what is now Every Good Boy. Erik never stopped writing music. And over the years I had developed certain skills working in studios around town that I wanted to apply to his music. We have always flirted with the idea of keeping something going. Every Good Boy is a very logical extension of our band in college. Same people, same line of thought, and we knew all along that eventually we would make a record.

EMIGRE: What has changed most prominently since the college band days? **BRIAN:** An important element that characterizes Every Good Boy, which was never true of our first group, is that we now have a good idea of what we want to say musically. This makes it a lot easier to then go ahead and say it. We have a more clearly defined musical vision. **BRIAN:** We all had different musical backgrounds: classical, jazz, R & B. We were inventing our musical direction as we went along in a rather haphazard and naive way. Over the years, with all of us listening to a broader range of music, and with me working in studios, I began to see how I could really zero in and help develop and define material and have it come out the way we intended to. This was always a problem for our first group. There, the material was always conceived as one thing and shot out as another.

EMIGRE: I was in the record store this morning, a huge store with a phenomenal import and independent section, beside the regular rock, jazz, new age, rap and soul sections. I looked around, and time and again, I was overwhelmed by how much music there was. How do you justify spending your time making more? **BRIAN:** It happens out of necessity. I never felt a need to justify it. Making music is like therapy for me and there's a lot of self-gratification that comes along with it. I can't deny that.

EMIGRE: How has your musical education influenced what you write now and the way you write it? **BRIAN:** I think the best musical education stresses expression, with little emphasis on technique. My education in college was somewhat like a musical track meet. Every student was pushed to compete and the most technically proficient were rewarded. I found that to be stifling. Our name Every Good Boy sort of demonstrates our collective thought on what we feel is wrong with the musical establishment. It represents the most rudimentary piece of musical knowledge: "Every Good Boy Does Fine." It's the first thing that you are taught from your piano teacher at age four when you are trying to learn the notes on the staff, E, G, B, D, F. And that's the beginning of the end in my opinion, because they put so much weight on theory and technique that you're never al-



Idful Music Corp.

lowed to express yourself. You're told that you can express yourself next year, and that next year you'll be ready. And it just goes on and on like that. Both Brian and I went through music educations that almost made us quit the profession for good, because they were very dull and very anti-music, and they wouldn't let us enjoy what we love to do. **BRIAN:** I had to go through the entire academic, scholastic music process that is required to receive a music degree to find out what a piece of shit it was, and to realize how full they'd pumped me with things that have nothing to do with making music. **EMIGRE:** But what a great thing to revolt against! **BRIAN:** I can't see myself wasting too much time or energy thinking about how to revolt against that. In the end, you just sort of let go of it.

EMIGRE: Most of your songs seem to deal with personal experiences, except "History," which seems to be about more than just a personal matter. It sounds very patriotic. Is it supposed to be a patriotic song? **ERIK:** "History" is about how people should support their own country and stand up against the people in charge who are screwing things up. The lyrics are actually quite trite. But this is my way of dealing with certain issues that bother me, that I'm confronted with each day as I read the newspaper. In that respect, "History" is as therapeutic and self-gratifying as some of the more private songs I've written. It's just my way of screaming at things, which is what everyone wants to do from time to time.

EMIGRE: One reason why I am personally attracted to your music is because it makes me think that I could make music myself. Your songs sound very simplistic, and that is not meant to be derogatory. I like the fact that I can clearly differentiate between the guitar, drums and bass or any other instruments that you might be using. It seems so simply put together. Do you guys spend a lot of time keeping your music so stripped down, or does that happen because that's the only way you know how to make music? **BRIAN:** It's conceived that way. I think we both feel that music should be readily accessible. It shouldn't be stilted. It shouldn't be made such that it can only be appreciated by an elite or by a few cool people. If I am going to involve myself with creating art of any sort, I'd like it to be publicly legitimate. **EMIGRE:** But do you put extra effort into keeping it simple?

ERIK: The reason it comes across as "simple" is because that's how we prefer to communicate. **BRIAN:** It's not too laborious, it just comes out simply. **EMIGRE:** But with all the sophisticated equipment that is available, is it not tempting to get involved with all the gadgets? **BRIAN:** If Erik was producing his music at any other studio, it would still have that simple element to it. But it's also quite reflective of the philosophy that exists here at Idjal. We built the studio ourselves, and there wasn't a lot of money for all of these extra electronic options that are available. It's pretty old-fashioned recording that we do here. We manipulate real acoustic spaces in traditional ways. We don't have the black boxes to recreate that sort of thing. And I like having those restrictions. Ultimately, it leads to coming up with fresher ways of doing certain things.

EMIGRE: Erik, where do your songs come from? Do they come to you like inspirational flashes, or do they require months of composing? **ERIK:** Most of the songs that I've written in my life that didn't come in an hour of goofy inspiration, the ones I had to work on for two or three months, never turned out to be anything more than contrived. Those usually got thrown out in the end. **EMIGRE:** Do you write songs with certain lyrics in mind or do they come after the compositional part?

ERIK: There's no formula. It happens in many ways. It's kind of a two-handed process where you try to squeeze a lot of stuff into a little box and make it all fit. And it doesn't really matter what goes in first, as long as everything fits well once it's in there.

EMIGRE: Are you quite satisfied with the way your songs finally end up sounding? Is there a point when you know that you have it exactly as you first heard it in your mind when you started? **ERIK:** We're getting there. For example, when you first heard the tape, your reaction to it was the reaction we wanted to elicit from you. That leads me to believe that we're on the right track.

EMIGRE: Ever since I mentioned to people that Emigre will start releasing music, the first thing they ask me to do is to describe the music. For every Good Boy, I've told people to imagine the Sex Pistols on quasuludes playing old unreleased Steely Dan songs. How far off am I? **ERIK:** That's so ridiculous, I love it! But I hate to categorize music. **EMIGRE:** I know there is a stigma attached to the idea of pigeonholing music, but on the other hand, your music has not exactly fallen out of the sky.

You've been exposed to music all your life. There must have been influences that have shaped your sensibilities?

ERIK: Certainly. Our music is made up of everything that we've ever heard during our lives, and that's a lot of music. It includes a lot of ethnic influences, it includes everything. But if I was going to describe it, I might say something stupid like I did earlier today when I was describing our music as "white music that you can't dance to," for lack of a better term. For me to say it is Beatle-esque, for example, would rip off the Beatles and would rip off us.

EMIGRE: When people listen to your music, is there any particular compliment that you wish for?

ERIK: That they like it.

EMIGRE: You're easily satisfied.

BRIAN: Well, it all depends on who is saying it.

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Nancy's Magazine.

In an indifferent universe, *Nancy's Magazine* serves as a guidebook, gives one a sense of one's place in the world, abeck in the arm. Each issue is devoted to certain topics that are pertinent to all humankind and its plight -- the Bus, pigeons, or Melvil Dewey and his decimal system. But content to offer more theoretical ponderings on these topics, the reader is offered actual try-it-at-home advice -- a guide to the best bisteps all over the world, excerpts from not-to-be-missed books of the library, feely recipes, directions on how to draw a horse, all peppered with polls revealing the pulse of the nation. I have only had in my hands three issues of *Nancy's Magazine*, but I trust that all the others serve as equally insightful maps of everyday living.

These magazines are mosaics of existence. The Dewey issue, for example, is a cornucopia of exciting information and practical tips. Take the topic of the Dewey Decimal system. Suddenly, it is transformed from a sneaky way of turning books into math into a comprehensive way of grasping the body of knowledge of the whole world. The issue guides you patiently through each category of thought, providing helpful examples. It also paints a glamorous picture of the library, regales with users' testimonials, drawings of librarians, and gripping passages from books you can check out of the library, like *Democracy in America* by Alexis de Toqueville and *Stylez and Sets for Long Hair* (1969).

However, it wasn't until the last issue that the whole POINT of *Nancy's Magazine* hit me in the head like a ton of bricks. I was perusing the latest issue, devoted to facts, which consists of several little booklets. As light-hearted as *Nancy's* is, each booklet was eerily somber, yet somehow encouraging -- like a voice from one's guardian angel. Some were straightforward -- the topics were enthusiasm, courage, and reasons not to kill yourself! Others had messages that were more vague -- "by the time you read this, I'll be dead," "zeilada," and "death is the cards."

realized that *Nancy's* embodies a philosophy that emphasizes the uniqueness and individuality of one's life. It is a philosophy that regards the world as a hostile universe. It regards the world as a place of uncertainty and stress. It regards the world as a place where one must take responsibility for the consequences of one's acts. Oddly enough, that is the exact definition of existentialism in the dictionary.

The thing I like most about *Nancy's Magazine* is that somehow it elevates everyday living and turns it into a celebration. One cartoon depicts a man running an errand for his wife. Hag calling, the dragon turns into an exercise in LIVING! The man in the story drives to the store, chanting "I LIVE! LIVE! LIVE!" In a frenzy, he buys the towels. The clerk asks him how he is, and he replies, "Fine, thanks." They stand on the steps outside and says "In fact, I'm HILARIOUS!" And that's why I like *Nancy's Magazine*.

Introduction and letters are by Dickie Lynn



Back cover of the Dewey Decimal issue



Front cover of the Dewey Decimal issue

We were able to get hold of Nancy herself and talked to her about her juggling act as a librarian at the Columbus Metropolitan Library and her "other" life as a publisher/designer and production person of *Nancy's Magazine*.

EMIGRE: When and why did you start writing and producing your own magazine? NANCY: The first issue of *Nancy's Magazine* was published back in 1965, in San Francisco. I had started a magazine very similar to *Nancy's* back in junior high school, but never quite completed an entire issue. So I felt a need to finish it. It was sort of a compulsion that was still on my desk from junior high school. Another reason for starting *Nancy's* is that I could never find a magazine that I wanted to read. I was very interested in magazines, but nothing seemed quite right. Magazines were either too light or too heavy. Nothing had the right mix. I guess I wanted to make a magazine that I wanted to read. And I wanted to read hard-hitting social commentary and then do a word find or a crossword puzzle.

EMIGRE: How do you distribute this magazine? NANCY: Initially, when I was still in San Francisco, there was a punk shopping mall on 16th Street and Albin, called "The Compound." That place sold it right off the bat, then record stores like Aquarius and others also started carrying it. Now I actually have a couple of distributors, including Tower. They were the first distributor to pick it up, which was really encouraging.

EMIGRE: Did you approach them yourself? NANCY: No, they called me. They wanted to buy them and they paid for them up front!

EMIGRE: How did Tower hear about *Nancy's*? NANCY: I don't know. EMIGRE: How many readers do you have?

NANCY: I have about 175 people that subscribe. Then, locally, there's another 200 copies that I sell through stores. On top of that, over time, I sell another 200 or so copies to people who want back issues. In the end I usually get rid of some 300 to 400 magazines.

EMIGRE: It must be a regular mini-business to keep going. NANCY: Yes, although it doesn't quite keep itself afloat. It always misses the break-even point. The more I do, the more ambitious I get. Especially with printing, I always manage to spend more and more.

EMIGRE: You mentioned that you wanted to make a magazine for yourself, that you would want to read, but there was obviously a need to share your ideas with other people. NANCY: I knew right off the bat that I wanted to distribute it.

EMIGRE: You had to bring your messages to the people? NANCY: Yes! One of the things I really wanted to publish in the first issue was an idea I had for bookends. The idea was to fill glasses or jugs with colored water, using food coloring, and turning them into bookends. That seemed like such an important idea, something I didn't want to hold inside me any longer. From the very beginning, I knew that the magazine was going to go beyond my friends and family. And I knew that I wanted to sell it. After I did the first issue, though, I never imagined I'd do a second one. EMIGRE: You just had to get the bookends idea out of your system, and once you revealed that trick to the world, it would be done with, right?

NANCY: Yes, after that I didn't think I had any more to say. But now I keep yearning to make the perfect magazine, which I haven't yet. It's an impossible goal, although I believe that there's a growing audience for unusual magazines. I work at the magazines and newspaper division at the library here in Columbus, Ohio. I'm exposed to magazines all the time. In general magazines are getting more and more visual, and that's frustrating to me. There's so little content in most of them.

REASONS NOT TO KILL YOURSELF

1 THERE'S NO EASY WAY TO DO IT

2 IT MAKES EVERYBODY ELSE

FEEL LOST

3 TO FEEL

4 BECAUSE BEING ORDINARY

IS INEVITABLE

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COVER OF THE "TRACT" ISSUE

EMIGRE: The most recent issue of Nancy's that I read was the "Tract" issue. And that one is so elaborate! All those separate little booklets collated together into a little pouch inside of the magazine. They're really beautiful! Do you print those all separately and then collate and staple them together yourself? NANCY: Yes, and I'll never do that again! That was another idea I had to get out of my system. I enjoyed working with different papers. I'm only beginning to learn about paper, what it can do, and what you can do with it. So I got my feet wet a little bit. But I'm ready to return to doing simple pages.

EMIGRE: How many issues of Nancy's Magazine have you published to date?

NANCY: There are ten altogether.

EMIGRE: What are the topics, in order, all the way back from the "bookend" issue?

NANCY: The "bookend" issue was the first, the second one didn't have a theme, the third one was the "Science" issue, and that's where I revealed the secret behind what eggplant really is...

EMIGRE: What is it?

NANCY: Well, basically. Then there was the "All About Places" issue. Number five was titled "Life," six was the "Wood" issue, which had an actual wood dot, like wood rings. Seven was "The Power" issue, eighth was the "Dewey Decimal" issue, nine the "Buses and Trains" issue, and the "Tract" issue is number ten.

EMIGRE: If you look back

at all the issues, are you satisfied with the way they have come out?

NANCY: Yes, although I'm always trying to cram in way too much.

EMIGRE: But I like that. There's all these little pieces of information and pictures floating around. It offers an interesting way to reading a page. It forces you to pay more attention to what you're looking at. I like the feeling that there's so much to convey that you can't fit it on one page.

NANCY: Well, good. I can't help myself anyway, that's just what happens. I probably would put in twice as much if I didn't control myself from time to time. It always ends up being a very pared down version of what it could be. I see magazines that I think are too crowded, and I long for that sparse, white page with one word in the middle. That's my dream page. But I could never do it.

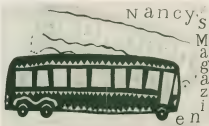
EMIGRE: You lived in San Francisco and you moved to Columbus. What is it about

Columbus, Ohio that makes people move there? What is it like there?

NANCY: Well, I grew up in Columbus, and I returned after living in San Francisco for 5 years. So I have an excuse.

EMIGRE: We actually receive quite a bit of material from Co-

INTERVIEW CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE



YOU CAN DRAW A HORSE

From the "You Can Draw A Horse" series



WHAT PEOPLE

Columbus: everything from the wildest fantasies to great homemade music. I was imagining this exodus of people moving to Columbus, Ohio in order to live out their creative potential. **NANCY:** I like that image. Let's just say that's why I moved here. The big difference between Columbus and San Francisco is that when people in Columbus ask you, "what do you do?" they want to know what your job is. If somebody asks you that in San Francisco, they say, but what do you really do? There is pressure to do something other than hold a conventional job. In Columbus there's no pressure to do anything creative, and maybe that's why there is so much great creative work done here.

EMIGRE: That's one of the things I like about your magazine. You talk about everyday things, like going to the library or taking the bus somewhere. Nancy's Magazine is a celebration of every day life, and I think out here, in California, people don't care to dwell on that much. Is Nancy's the result of living in the midwest? Are you more aware of the simple things in life? **NANCY:** Maybe. There's certainly not a rush for the arts here in Columbus. For a while I even wondered if there was a place for a magazine like Nancy's here. But I'm finding out there are quite a bit of people who are interested. Although to be doing a magazine like Nancy's here in Columbus remains an oddity, and I think that's the difficulty of being here.

EMIGRE: Do you feel that you're a weird person in Columbus?

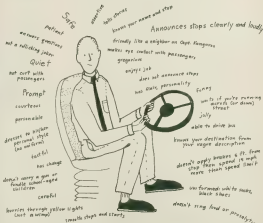
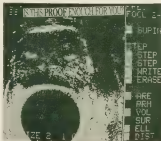


Fig. 1. The Ideal Bus Driver: A Composite

Thank you to all who completed the D-D Poll questionnaire. Results are based on responses to an unselected representative sample of a heterogeneous population of all kinds of people who submit the information requested to influence. Coming soon to "Ball of the People" what Parents Should Do, to be printed, used name and address to 50% in Random Lists.



Spurred from "The Daily" designed and written by Steve Smith for the "You Can Draw A Horse" series

NANCY Not very weird, but kind of. I certainly don't desire to be weird. I didn't tell people at work about the magazine for quite a while, and then I "came out." You would never have to worry about that in San Francisco! Instead it would just be the opposite. You would "come out" as someone who watches television or something.

EMIGRE In terms of design, is Nancy's truly a naive magazine, or are you faking naive? NANCY: I hate to say it, but with me it's real. I do most of the drawings and the layout, such as it is, but I'm not a designer. It's kind of embarrassing because,

through my husband Greg, who is a designer, I find out little by little how naive Nancy's really is. I didn't realize it, though, until it was pointed out to me. EMIGRE: Do you think that Nancy's Magazine is particularly connected to your being a librarian?

NANCY: Well, I really enjoy being in libraries and doing the kinds of searches that you do when you're a librarian. It's like detective work. I always enjoyed research projects. But now that I'm a librarian I've found out that's not exactly what you end up doing.

EMIGRE: What do you do? NANCY: Public service. I answer people's questions. I deal in Knowledge and Information and the ambiguity of Truth.

I hate to say that it's not soul-satisfying.

I would like to say,

"no comment" on that.

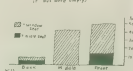
LE WANT IN TERMS OF BUSES

Fig. 2. Preferred means of local transit (buses) in which time and money are not factors



Analysis:
People prefer smaller sized things for local transit.

Fig. 3. Distribution of ridership (where respondents would sit if bus were empty)



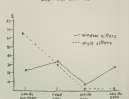
Analysis:
People in the middle need the most air.

Fig. 5. Nature of time spent on bus



Analysis:
A whopping majority considers time on bus as Real Good Thing.

Fig. 4. Relationship between chosen seat and bus activities



Analysis:
Light and air from window stimulates chemical in brain that inhibits nausea and enhances cognitive development.

There's more

Dealing with kids requires knowledge of special needs. Here is an important note:



Never ask.

helpful hint



Tell.

"helpful hint" from the "Deeds Not Words" team

Emigre music

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***Innocence at Will* (Ed 001)**

by Stephen Sheehan is a collection of work that spans the years 1984 to 1990 and includes performances by Digital Sex, some solo material, and a song played by Sheehan's current group, The World. Most of the songs in this collection are still available in their original context, but only through New Rose Records of France. Emigre decided it was time to finally make the music of this multi-talented musician from Omaha, Nebraska available in America. Tracks include "Thoughts of You," "I Can't Wait," and the previously unreleased "Mother's Leatherflesh." Price: \$19. plus \$4.50 for postage and handling

***Energy, Work & Power* (Ed 002)**

by Fact TwentyTwo is James Towning's first solo project released on CD. Up until now, Fact TwentyTwo has been a cassette-only project, and its music has been available in limited editions solely through Towning's own Black music label which is based in Columbus, Ohio. Featured on this CD are 10 remixed versions of tracks selected from Towning's earlier work, including "Permanent Green," "Headlock," and "March Forth." Also featured are "Immortal Smile" and "Rasli's Fear," two brand new tracks! The musical collages offered on this compilation are referred to by their creator as "Bimapped Music" and if you have enjoyed Emigre's experimental approach to graphic design, chances are that you will equally enjoy Fact TwentyTwo. (For those of you who attended the TYP20 conference in Oxford, England, Fact TwentyTwo's music was used as the soundtrack in the Emigre presentation.) CD foldout cover designed by James Towning. Price: \$19. plus \$4.50 for postage and handling

***Social Graces* (Ed 003)**

by Every Good Boy is the first release by this trio from Chicago, Illinois. This CD offers to subtly melodic compositions each written and arranged by Erik Deery, whose biting vocals are set against Every Good Boy's characteristically stripped down instrumentation. Ingeniously produced by bandmember Brian Deck at the notorious Idful Music studio. CD foldout cover designed by Erik Deery and Barry Deck. Price: \$19. plus \$4.50 for postage and handling

All three CD's were digitally mastered and edited by Jonathan Wyner at Northeastern Digital Recording in Southborough, Massachusetts.

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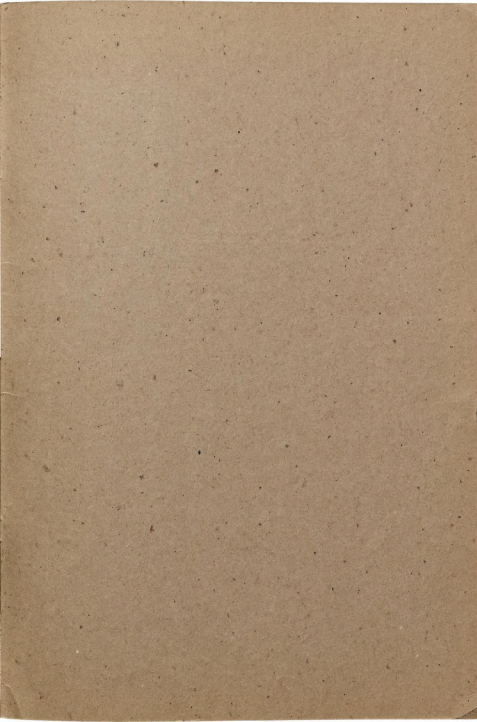
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